LOAN EXHIBIT

INNESS
WYANT
BLAKELOCK

X 708.1
C43 Mc6
1913
WHITNEY MUSEUM
OF
AMERICAN ART

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
Metropolitan New York Library Council - METRO

http://archive.org/details/catloane00inne

Catalogue

of the

Loan Exhibition

of Important Works

by

George Inness
Alexander Wyant
Ralph Blakelock

Held at the Chicago Galleries of Moulton & Ricketts
March Tenth to March Twenty-Second - MCMXIII

1913

With An Appreciation of the Life
and Works of These Masters by

James William Pattison
Elliott Daingerfield
George W. Stevens
Harriett Monroe

This Book Is Dedicated

to those who perceive the beauty of American Art, and appreciate the genius of its makers; who believe there is no Art in the world which better expresses the sentiment of landscape in all its moods; who perceive that the exact painting of individual objects is of less importance than the massing together of larger parts; that the light which envelops all things, that the atmosphere which permeates them, and the trembling vibration which suggests life is the reality of landscape; that George Inness, A. H. Wyant and Ralph Blakelock were the men who best appreciated these great truths and the greatest exponents of them.

MOULTON and RICKETTS

Born 1825
Died 1894

George Inness, N. A.

An Appreciation
By Elliott Daingerfield

THE constantly growing interest in the work of George Inness, the wider and better understanding of the master's aims in his art, and the splendid awakening to our patriotic privilege in claiming him as our very own, seem warrant enough, if warrant were needed, for giving again and again to this public all the information and thought of him that one can assemble. We shall, ere long, acclaim him, as Holland her Rembrandt, Spain her Velasquez, or France her Corot, and with equal justice of claim. In his art there is nothing ephermeral. It is sound in its logic, based, as all great art must be, upon knowledge, and bears in its bosom the deep secret of Nature's beauty as he saw and understood it. Somewhere I have said that we shall not know the Art of Inness unless we place

ourselves squarely on the platform of his religious convictions, because it was through the influence of his deeply religious nature that he could eliminate the gross, could put aside all clamor or vainglory in technique and seek the spiritual which is the intent and the success of his highest effort. Yet not for a moment must any student of his work believe there was disdain for technical achievement, or haphazard in his execution. Such an opinion would be very far from the truth.

He was forever seeking to settle "principles" of treatment that he might be quite free for the higher expression, and further, one may point to certain of the earlier things and ask if in the art of any master there is more certainty of touch, more excellence of drawing, or more *bravura* of brush handling than these works show. That he chose to broaden it later, chose to fill great planes with simple tones, chose to find the secret of plumed elm or gnarled oak with a rub of color, is precisely the reason we must see the master in such work.

"How," asked a painter one day, "Can you make a foreground so full of detail, so suggestive of growth, of weeds and grass and all the thousand things which the rest of us have to do separately and in detail, and you achieve with what is little more than a rub of color?" "I have a method of handling my brush that is all my own," replied the old master. If then you are only interested in technique, you must look in George Inness for a technique that is all his own. Nowhere else will you find it, and it is not of the schools.

Contrast, which is drama, tone which is feeling, color which is religion—the all in all when made to express form—light which is immortality, these are to be found in the art of George Inness.

Freedom! was ever man more free than he? Can we look, unmoved, with this great doctrine in our hearts, at a storm swept canvas of his? Does he not bend the trees to his will and fling vast curtains of cloud across a scene which but a moment later he makes to glow with the warmth and glory of sunshine?

A Spiritualist? Yes, and sometimes a Spiritist, because he was always an investigator. Why else did he spend long days and destroy picture upon picture to verify for himself the theory he had adduced, that the greatness of color must be found in the middle tone?

That he could not for long conform to any particular creed or method of religion was because of his impatience with restraint. Nor was he always consistent. What emotional artist ever is?

If George Inness could have set down in rule formula the things he dreamed of, and did express in his painting, a miracle would have been accomplished. We should, then, to hear his message, to love his work in the right way, listen for what he has to say to us in that work, and we shall breathe the flower filled atmosphere of the Spring, we shall see the orchards in blossom, and the passing days will bring us the full leaf of green, June-green Summer, and presently the thunder will roll over the hills, the clouds stoop low, and darkness steal upon the land—until indeed the master hand breaks again the empyrean blue and bathes a dripping world in sunshine. We shall go into the deep and silent places of the woods, make acquaintance with giants of the forest, and steal upon the shy heron in his haunt. More, much more has he given us, and the long note in his art as in his life is Sincerity. He pronounced anathema upon all sham or wicked effrontery, and gave intense love to the beauty of nature, which he interpreted and made permanent in splendid art.

George Inness, N. A.

An Appreciation
By James William Pattison

IT HAS been written that Inness became attached to Swedenborgian faith in "later years." It was, however, at an earlier period than this indicates. Through the influence of his stepmother, he joined the Baptists very early in life, when scarcely more than a boy. But this society dropped him because of nonconformity with the strict practices, and his independent way of thinking. Among the Baptists, of that day, there could be no exercise of independent thought. In fact, he was already, at that early time, carried away by the beauties of Swedenborg's doctrines, especially the charming theories regarding the relationships of colors. He attempted to weave these captivating ideas into his pictures. One of his troubles was to realize the theories while attempting to render Nature truthfully. The Lord did not always sustain the pretty schemes of the religionists. It was in midlife, about twenty years after the opening of his audit existence, that an effort was made to give him an opportunity to fully express his many-times announced theories. A party of his friends, impressed by the artist's earnestness, pledged a sum of money amounting to $10,000, which he was to freely use, during one year, for the production of any sort of pictures to illustrate Swedenborgian theories.

Inness being thus relieved of the trammels of poverty worked with exaltation and greater freedom. He secured three large canvasses, and designed on them mystical subjects: "The Valley of the Shadow of Death," "The New Jerusalem," and another which I never saw and know nothing of. "The Valley of the Shadow of Death" grew out of his own fancy, as he found no model for it in Nature. The larger part of the canvas was occupied by huge masses of gray rock and bluish purple clouds, piling up on either side of a narrow passage which penetrated the confused mass down hill. Down in the depth a solitary figure, in white, was disappearing to involve itself in "The Shadow of Death." He frequently repeated that phrase—"Not Death, you know, but the Shadow of Death."

Did he make masterpieces of these pictures? No. Inness was your true "Impressionist." While taking all sorts of liberties with the Nature he saw and painted so superbly, he could only express himself well when he had actually seen it. He had to have the inspiration of a true impulse, an actual impression in order to start the workings of his imagination. For these great allegories he could find no actual motive. His pathos became bathos, and the colors which he intended to be clear were killed down by overworking. It was a case of a man mistaking the nature of his genius.

As we study Inness' exquisite paintings, nothing is more evident than their truth to Nature. His earliest work was in a certain degree "hard." It was wonderfully true and often tender; but rarely lovable. But as we all know the hardness disappeared and very soon his pictures were enveloped in poetry as the hills are in glorious mystery, nor do any of us regret that the artist's Swedenborgianism, however much he may have loved it, was, for the major part of his life, but little manifest.

Plate I

GEORGE INNESS — "Path Thru Florida Pines," Size 42 x 32.—Painted in 1894. In a picture of this sort we see Inness far along in the path which leads to greatness. In his entire output of paintings it is rare to find such breadth of treatment, largeness of out-doors, and fine combinations of lines. The picture certainly is a great masterpiece.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate II

GEORGE INNESS—"Home of the Heron." Size 42 x 36. The picture is in the artist's best period; it was painted in 1891. All the facts are plainly rendered while the mystery of the woodland is delightfully maintained. Sunshine falls upon the monumental tree trunk and scatters itself about on many objects. This light is repeated in the sparkling autumnal foliage and upon a dignified heron, standing upon a fallen log amid a tangle of flowering weeds.

—Loaned by J. G. Snydacker, Chicago.

Plate III

GEORGE INNESS — "Summer—Montclair," Size 42 x 32.—The artist's home was in a country with fine trees, giving upright lines and luxuriant foliage. Not disturbed by complicated composition, the artist could give attention to that which he did best; to refined color, to looseness of touch and mystery in form, to poetical treatment, hardly equaled by any painter. —Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

GEORGE INNESS—"Return to the Farm." Size 38 x 26. One of the artist's rare figure subjects, this old man is characterful. A ray of sunshine falls redly and affectionately on his shoulder, a caressing greeting. His old, faded blue trousers and no-colored coat suggests the general arrangement of vibrating tints of similar quality, from the indescribable blue of the low toned sky, through several greens and earth colors; even the flesh in keeping with them. —Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

Plate IV

Plate V

GEORGE INNESS—"Medway, Mass." Size 20 x 30. Painted in 1869. This view over wide extensive landscape is certainly full of interest as it is full of actualities; and evidently a specific locality and not a composition. The greens of midsummer are wonderfully well managed, and literal truth marks every inch of the landscape. While the painter did not indulge himself with the mysticisms of his later paintings, the atmosphere and light of the summer time are well rendered.

—Loaned by Ira M. Cobe, Chicago.

Plate VI

GEORGE INNESS—"A Sunny Autumn Day," Size 32x42. Painted in 1892. A brilliant autumn day, a line of white clouds traverses the sky, and next to it a bank of autumnal trees, beside a long strip of brilliant green, beyond a dark green meadow; superb trees in autumn color, red on the right and broken yellow and bronze color on the left.

—Loaned by Mrs. Chauncey J. Blair.

Plate VII

GEORGE INNESS—"The Coming Storm," Size 25x30. Painted in 1873. This dark, stormy sky shows spots of a slaty blue in the openings. Against this dark sky the trees are in great variety of greens, brilliantly lighted by low sun. The flat foreground is neutral and mellow.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

Plate VIII

GEORGE INNESS—"Late Afternoon." Size 27 x 22. It is a low toned painting, made in Summer, but reduced to rich tones. The sunlight faces through the middle of a meadow not far off and catches on the principal tree trunk. The correct drawing of these trees gives an excellent effect, and mellow color was never made better.

— Loaned by J. G. Snydacker, Chicago.

Plate IX

GEORGE INNESS—"Early Summer," Size 18 x 30—Painted in 1880. Inness was very fond of studying an effect which artists are likely to avoid—the intense greens of early Summer. There are few artists who can compete with him in rendering this problem. The coolness and restfulness of these green pictures make them very acceptable. In the midst of all this youth the old man trudges along clumsily.

—Loaned by Hackley Art Gallery.

Plate X

GEORGE INNESS—"Moonrise, Montclair," Size 30x45—It is a charming display of what can be done with one tone; a peculiar brown tint has been very thinly rubbed all over the canvas. The thickness and thinness of the paint serving to define trees and houses, sky and meadow, sheep and figure. This continued brown tone is relieved by a blue spot in the middle of the sky, continuing along the horizon. —Loaned by R. C. Vose, Boston.

Plate XI

GEORGE INNESS—"Milton on the Hudson." Size 20 x 30. A quiet gray green June picture, low gray sky with vague clouds; the greenish, lighted strip of near ground whispers very tenderly and all the cast shadows caress the ground affectionately. Without any violent light or shade it recalls luminous summerday, when the light is diffused throughout all the soothing picture.

—Loaned by L. C. Eastman, Clinton, Ia.

Plate XII

GEORGE INNESS—"Sunset on the Coast—Etretat," Size 18½ x 26—This picture shows us the cliffs at Etretat, France, where the sea has gradually eaten away the softest stone, leaving the harder forming an arch, and beyond it a rock needle. When the tide comes in all this foreground will be under water. The lower sky is brilliant with sunset colors.

—Loaned by R. C. Vose, Boston.

Plate XIII

GEORGE INNESS—"Approaching Storm," Size 11 x 14—The weird light which precedes the coming storm, when the last rays of the sun catch the still, unclouded trees, gives opportunity for the making of a true picture. There is something intensely poetical in the effect the artist has here secured.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XIV

GEORGE INNESS—"Evening Glow." Size 24 x 18. Painted in 1883. In sentiment this picture strikingly suggests a painting made for color contrasts rather than actualities of landscape incident. There is just enough form and just enough light and shade to make the sky glow and give value to its evening effect. This proves the artist's high calling, inasmuch as it is not scenery but artistic treatment.

—Loaned by G. H. Buek, New York.

Plate XV

GEORGE INNESS—"Morning Mists," Size 20 x 30.—Painted in 1887. The picture is all grey. The round sun near the horizon accents the center of the picture. There is a group of boats, their dark hulls of the same quality of grey; some have light sails and others dark. The only contrast in all this tone is a bit of mysterious warm colored sky. All is beautifully handled.

—Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

Plate XVI

GEORGE INNESS—"Landscape." Size 12 x 16. Inness has painted a level country with long, horizontal lines; the suggestions of distant farms are very interesting, including the windmill in middistance. The foreground suggests a waterway, its edges broken and marshy, except one side built into a raised tow-path, where a boat is moored. The expansive sky is fretted by moist clouds, mysterious and full of light.

—Loaned by Frank B. Stone, Chicago.

Plate XVII

GEORGE INNESS—"Spring Showers," Size 42x32—Scarcely any of this artist's pictures are more mysterious than this one. The fresh greens of spring foliage are delightfully rendered, being clear but still gray. The grass in front is low toned and neutral. There is a sense of wetness in every part. No bright colors appear on the canvas.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

Plate XVIII

GEORGE INNESS—"Glowing Sun." Painted in 1894. Size 24x36. The picture is not as dark as the photo suggests; pale yellowish sun is surrounded by brilliant red, the same color edging all the clouds. The red permeates the distance and echoes in the warm foreground. The trees are neutral green.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

Plate XIX

GEORGE INNESS—"The Two Rainbows." Size 20 x 30. Painted in 1893. This effect of wet trees, brilliantly sunlighted and working pale against a rainy sky, was a favorite with Inness at a certain period. As the sun is at our backs, the white house and pale branches gleam brilliantly. In the vapory sky rainbows softly show themselves.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XX

GEORGE INNESS—"Albano-Italy." Size 11 x 15½. No painter of literalism could have invented this dreamland, and maybe that Inness was very much himself while painting Italy. His great merit was his ability to paint actual scenes so delightfully idealized that they please our poetical instincts.

—Loaned by G. H. Buek, New York.

Plate XXI

GEORGE INNESS—"June," Size 9x12. Painted in 1891. This little picture somewhat recalls similar scenes by Corot. There are varied green trees, a mellow-toned green meadow, and a thatched cottage. The sky is light and cool and neutral.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XXII

GEORGE INNESS—"Pequonic River," Size 18 x 26.—Painted in 1876. The picture is one of Inness' studies of early June foliage and, of course, shows a variety of tints of quite pure green, and the same is reflected in the water. The little strip of foreground strand is also cool, and all these colors harmonize with a broken blue sky running into pale salmon-colored lights. —Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XXIII

GEORGE INNESS—"Twilight," Size 18x 24. Painted in 1887. The entire picture is a series of low-toned, broken greens—very mellow; some bright reddish spots in the sky gives this a delightful effect of twilight.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

ALEXANDER H. WYANT

An Appreciation
By George W. Stevens

Born 1836
Deid 1892

Alexander H. Wyant, N. A.

ALEXANDER H. WYANT, revered as he was during life by those who felt the mastery of his art, has with the passing of the years been accorded a more and more exalted position in the galaxy of masters whose art will endure for all time.

The record of each generation striving to make its contribution to the sum of man's achievement, is illumined by only a few rare masters in each branch of human endeavor such as a Chaucer or a Shakespeare in literature, a Mozart or a Wagner in music, a Hals or a Whistler in art, and so it is out of the multifarious activities of his time, Wyant stands forth as one who in his work will live for all time that is to come.

With other masters cast in a similar mold he sprang into life, as did Minerva, fully accoutered. Environment during his early life contributed nothing to his genius, for until he was twenty years of age, it had not been his privilege to look upon anything that could be called a work of art. His first visit to a city of any considerable size brought him before a canvas by Inness, who at once became his inspiration and later his friend and admirer.

With the prescience oftimes accompanying genius, Wyant when he went abroad to study, chaffed under what was to him the unnecessary ciceronage of a teacher, and as did also the master Millet, he soon forsook the ateliers steeped in tradition, and set off by himself untrammeled by precedent or convention, free to give full expression to those talents with which he was even then so completely equipped.

The tender aspects of nature in the Adirondacks; at the edge of the deep wood or trembling on the peaceful meadow stretches of his native land, were to him all sufficient to supply the themes on which he builded his master-works. In the landscape, with his new understanding, he saw revealed those poetic beauties and felt those subtle harmonies that for ages had failed to impress themselves upon the consciousness of painters. Such was the clarity of his mind and sight that these truths observed by him and recorded with such masterfulness are discernible now, even to those of us who ordinarily hear not the horns of Elfland blowing.

He has been called, together with Inness, the father of American landscape painting, but he was and is, even more than father, for his genius and his influence are not encumbered by time or by international boundaries. In him there was none of the crudity of an inventor, the uncertainty of an explorer or the timidity of an innovator for in his art we discern at once, and so will those of all times be able to discern, the repose of strength, the grace of mastery and the simplicity of truth.

Alexander H. Wyant, N. A.

An Appreciation
By James William Pattisno

WYANT commenced his study of art under the influence of the Hudson River School; also some of his work bears the stamp of certain painters of France, members of the, so-called, Barbizon group. When matured, his painting was not like any of these. Among the Americans of this period none struck a new note excepting Inness, Wyant and Martin; Blakelock appearing at a later date. To make pictures in any prevailing fashion may call for talent, good execution and taste; but these are not the marks of original genius. To commence with painting in the fashion and then gradually change for the better and higher is the mark of genius, so acknowledged the world over. At the time we speak of, the elder Hart was painting individual facts most frequently in autumnal colors. His trees certainly bore good leaves, and in his complicated foregrounds a botanist could find all necessary specimens. The bark of his tree trunks was painfully perfect and the stones on the hillside invited the geologist's hammer. So did his clouds. Whatever the time of the year his color was rather hot, but it was all in the fashion. His younger brother was almost exactly like him, but affected colors approaching coldness. Bierstadt had been to the Rocky Mountains—with a military escort—and brought back majestic peaks seamed with details, to keep company with marvelous foregrounds of fern, sticks and stones all as interesting as the mountain; so that the art critics wrote glowing descriptions of the foregrounds rather than of the peaks. Sanford R. Gifford painted prettily and interestingly, but not in a large way.

Commencing in this style, Wyant gradually developed a sense of space, studied for its own sake, painted with grey tones rather than with gay pigments. In his liveliest work the colors are lively but never smothered in over-richness; when grey, never falling into cold or black tones. His foregrounds became simple, suggesting confusion but reduced to surface, nothing in them was permitted to attract attention. In the old Hudson River painting, a tree was an object standing against the sky. With Wyant a tree was a part of a broad scheme, more often painted into the sky than on it, and the same thing we see often in the landscapes of Inness and Blakelock. In Wyant's picture every part was inter-dependent, not independent and separate. Above all was his color, always peaceful, never garish, always to be dreamed over, never to be struggled with.

Wyant's pictures are not collections of facts, but abstractions, a flowing together of forms and tones for the sake of decorative effect, each tone leading to another, each dependent on the other, each a part of another. Perhaps he painted a scene; always things floated in air, and this was more important than the story of the scene; and these are the elements of poetry.

Plate XXIV

A. H. WYANT—"Winona Falls." Size 28½ x 22½. Painted in 1877. This landscape was painted at a period when the artist was a student of facts, and every item in the landscape is detailed with wonderful faithfulness. All the world seems to be in love with this beautiful picture, because of its interesting subject and the master touch in its execution. I have rarely seen a work more universally beloved. —Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XXV

A. H. WYANT—"Adirondack Woods," Size 48 x 36—The faithful drawing of these woods and the broken foreground suggest that the scene was painted from nature, at least it is very like an actual transcript, so gracefully composed that we find pleasure in its lines as well as the beautiful tone and the attractiveness of the place. The color is cool and soothing, though so strong.

—Loaned by Ira M. Cobe, Chicago.

Plate XXVI

A. H. WYANT — "Mountain Lake." Size 32 x48. It is seldom that we see, from Wyant's easel, an extensive mountain scene. Carefully studied as to details the vast space and nobility of mountain form, and the mystery of intervening atmosphere, are beautifully studied. Solemnity and dignity reign over the land. The genius of Wyant has reduced the asperities of actuality to poetry.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XXVII

A. H. WYANT—"Landscape." Size 16 x 20. In this pleasing composition the surfaces are precise in finish, finely graded and over all a beautiful atmosphere. It is a most pleasing picture in every respect and its color is tenderly softened by the artist's grey notes amid the greens. It was painted in one of the artist's beautiful moods.

—Loaned by Paul Jummel, Chicago.

Plate XXVIII

A. H. WYANT—"Landscape." Size 10 x 14. A luminous, loosely painted canvas; not specific in coloring, except as the band of landscape is admirable with greenish tints, broken by darks and subdued greys getting greener in front. The sky has no colors, except the superb play of cool penetrability in fine quality.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XXIX

A. H. WYANT—"After Spring Shower." Size 22 x 30. In the picture a pale broken sky spreads itself over a suggestively laid-in landscape, with a band of clear dark greens stretching across the mid-foreground. On a canvas of this size many objects may be introduced, but Wyant has kept it all in reserve and in tender tints of grey and green. It is a noble example of the artist's poetical painting.

—Loaned by W. V. Kelley.

Plate XXX

A. H. WYANT—"The Marshes." Size 36 x 56. Wyant could make a lovable picture, of important dimensions, with less material than almost any other painter. We have here one of his best and its quiet tones are distinctly colorful. These long, flowing lines seem restful, and the lakelet makes a fine center, under the luminous sky. The soft medley of clouds also suggest restfulness.

—Loaned by Edward F. Swift, Chicago.

Plate XXXI

A. H. WYANT—"Silver Birches." Size 20 x 16. The well drawn forms of this tangle of trunks and branches suggests that the canvas went outdoors with the artist and the clever use of subdued silver tints seems more acceptable than bright colors. All these little tonal pictures, by Wyant, are high art.

—Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

Plate XXXII

A. H. W Y A N T—"After the Storm." Size 10 x 14. A marshy reach trembles vaguely next the foreground, and is bordered by slightly rising land with trees, where figures are hinted at. All these forms melt together tenderly and keep company with the cloudy sky. Like all landscapes by Wyant, the colors are subdued, though produced with a variety of pigments.

—Loaned by Frank B. Stone, Chicago.

Plate XXXIII

A. H. WYANT—"Fishing." Size 8¼ x 10¾. Wyant painted many little pictures, experiments in color, or worked off to relieve his feelings when an idea claimed attention. A patch of water, surrounded by a smother of herbage, furnishes an excuse to lay on his brownish gray tones, and some greens, under the luminous, inpalpable skies; and these bits of tenderness are fine examples of his work.

—Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

Plate XXXIV

A. H. WYANT—"The Brook," Size 16x20—This is a cool, delicate water color painting, handled with trembling notes of many sorts of green color, broken with cool earth tones; a lovable soothing picture.

—Loaned by W. O. Johnson, Chicago.

Plate XXXV

A. H. WYANT—"Sunset." Size 10 x 8. The dashing brushwork gives brilliant sparkle to both land and sky. The rich note of sunset color and its reflection in a little river is augmented by darks carried quite around. Clever handling produces sparkle. Nothing here is materialistic—all suggests much, which was the purpose of the artist.

—Loaned by J. G. Snydacker, Chicago.

Plate XXXVI

A. H. WYANT—"Evening," Size 12 x 16—This solidly and broadly painted sunset has a brilliant strip next to the horizon with a broken sky of blues and greys overhead. The overcast foreground shows us dark greens and earth tones. Wyant has laid this in with a full brush and bold modeling. Naturally he has made this a brilliant gem.

—Loaned by Hackley Art Gallery.

Plate XXXVII

A. H. WYANT—"Entrance to the Forest," Size 18 x 25. Each one of these noted artists, Wyant, Blakelock and Inness, indulged himself in reducing all colors of nature to a selected tonality. In this picture Wyant has schemed in browns. In fact, it is a serious question whether strict actualities would make the picture more acceptable. This is picture making and probably leaves the artist free to express sentiment rather than catalogue facts.

—Loaned by Wm. V. Kelley, Chicago.

Plate XXXVIII

A. H. WYANT—"November Day," Size 18 x 28—Like all Wyants, this is not specific in coloring; has a driving motion in its gray, storm threatening sky, and the foreground is rugged and weedy, the spots of naked soil interspersed with greens of the peculiar color seen when a storm is coming up, and they are broken by tan tints. The woman's figure adds necessary touches of white and brown. A superb picture.
—Loaned by Ralph Cudney, Chicago.

Plate XXXIX

A. H. WYANT—"Dawn," Size 11 x 17—Again Wyant resorts to his sparkling effects, to his tangles of shining foliage and tree trunks. He did not intend that we should walk heavily over these hills but should stand waist deep in sparkle and tremor and this indeed is poetry.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney, Chicago.

Plate XL.

A. H. WYANT—"The Pines," Size 12x18—A luminous little picture of a mountain slope in cool greens, partly covered by a forest of young pines, generally not dark. The near part is a broken meadow; a light, lively sky, of silver gray, seems ready to weep a shower.

—Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

Plate XLI

A. H. WYANT—"A Woodland Tangle," Size 13 x 7½—As we talk about these three men, recurring examples of their pictures remind us of how much alike they were in sentiment. A tangle of branches and foliage when the texture of trees glides into the texture of overgrown foreground cannot fail to make us a sparkling picture. —Loaned by G. H. Buek, New York.

Plate XLII

A. H. WYANT—"Evening," Size 14 x 20—This far-reaching landscape representing the silent air of waning day with delicate sky tinged with red and yellow. The quiet smokes floating lazily and the shades of night creeping gradually over everything is full of Wyant poetry. The dark massive trees on the left seems to be built into the mystery of night and adds much to the sentiment of the hour.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate XLIII

A. H. WYANT—"Spring Morning," Size 14 x 20—The sky is extraordinary, its whitish parts suggesting a shingling of clouds over the entire heavens, with the slightest contrasts of light and shade. A half-defined distance sits softly in this sky, and varies little from it, which glides upon loosely painted land of the usual greens broken into Wyant grays. A charming bit of poetry.

—Loaned by L. C. Eastman, Clinton, Iowa.

Plate XLIV

A. H. WYANT—"November," Size 16 x 22—On a canvas, grounding of some indeterminate gray tint, Wyant has dashed bold brushfuls of whitish paint in the most knowing, but the wildest fashion, drawing superb clouds. This same tint of underground answers for the distant hill, and shapes itself into trees, meadow and bushes, gathering dull green on the slope and sage green nearer; all in capital sentiment.

—Loaned by Chas. P. Pinckard, Chicago.

Plate XLV

A. H. WYANT—"The End of Day." Size 25 x 30—How the massive forms in this picture impress us with the tranquility of the hour. We could scarcely imagine that Wyant could do these solidities when he so often handled a dancing brush. The tonality is a series of remarkably fine brownish tints.

—Loaned by Chas. P. Pinckard, Chicago.

RALPH BLAKELOCK

Ralph Blakelock

An Appreciation
By Harriet Monroe

RALPH BLAKELOCK, whom we class with those elder American masters, Inness, Wyant and Martin, is scarcely yet an old man, and might still be in the prime of his power but for his lamentable loss of mental health nearly a score of years ago.

Born in 1847, the son of a New York physician, he resisted the family influence toward his father's profession and resolved to devote his life to painting and music. In neither art, however, did he seek instruction, but prepared himself to be a painter by a journey to the far west and life among the Indians. Probably his experience was better than any art school for a man of his quality of mind. In the scholastic sense he never learned to draw, or acquired "the manual trick of painting." But he acquired something better—an original, intensely individual style. He was indeed a combination of painter and musician. His sense of nature's rhythms and harmonies was musical; he seems to play them off on lutes and lyres of vibrant color. He reminds one more, perhaps, of Chopin than of any painter; in fact it might be interesting to trace kinship of temperament between these two great artists, these passionate dreamers driven to melancholy or madness by the buffetings of fate and the intensity of their proud desire.

Blakelock was a mystic and a colorist, and the solitude of his intellectual life turned his brooding thought to flame that burned him up at last. He lived and painted with singular intensity, acquiring his art, building up his own technique—for he had no training, experiencing beauty like a passion, and suffering deeply over his efforts to express the mysterious splendor of the world.

Here was a soul so sensitive, fiery, highly wrought, that he could scarcely be at home on earth. And the world, as usual, was slow to understand him; the pictures he worked over so long and lovingly it bought grudgingly, spending little money and less sympathy. Perhaps the poor half-starved artist would have been consoled could he have known that "The Pipe Dance," that masterpiece which he sold for a few hundred dollars, would find its place at last in his own city's museum and be valued at many hundred times what he received.

He dreamed and brooded over his pictures, painting and scraping out and repainting, keeping them in his studio for years. Indeed, no public demand urged him to hasten; he could indulge to the utmost that dangerous self-questioning mysticism which caused him to delay and destroy, and which finally snapped the strings of his delicate instrument while he was still a comparatively young man.

The poetry of nature was his subject, a poetry which he embodied sometimes in trees, sometimes in flitting, dancing figures—Indian figures usually, because the red race quickened his imagination from the time of his early western journey, and expressed to him, more directly than our own, the human relation with nature. But whether visibly peopled or not, Blakelock's wilderness was always spirit-haunted. Each tree and water-fall had its special nymph for him, as for the Greeks, and he makes us feel those mysterious presences in the shadows of his imagination.

An Appreciation
By James William Pattison

Ralph Blakelock

ACTIVITY becomes work when inspired by the love of gain; when not paid for, it is play. Sometimes paid activity is joyful work, the outcome of heart feeling, and this is fortunate. Who enjoys his life of a fair afternoon, the professional ball player, adapting his movements to set rules, or a group of boys, full of young life, batting and running for the joy of motion, never trammelled by umpires enforcing abstract rules? The one carries out his game correctly and cleanly, the other only pretty well, incorrectly and raggedly. But to whom comes the joy? Of course the hireling is proud of himself and conscious of his rectitude; but the free boy—give us the boy, always. Blakelock, when painting, was only a boy. He had a consciousness about art, that it should be Art and not artifice; a landscape should not be a catalog of physical facts—first a sky, then a distance, then a midland and, finally, a foreground. With him a tree in the sky was but a spot of color; enough like a tree to pass muster in the judgment of charity, but so dragged into the colors of the sky as to be a part of the sky, provided we be allowed to call that a sky which is halfway a part of a tree. And on the other hand, the same tones which we call trees seem to be melting away across a part that we call meadow. Then there is a gradation of tones marching toward us, step by step, which we call foreground. In the midst of these indefinite brush statements, there is probably a luminous reach that assuredly suggests gleaming sky, and certain no very defined spots that may or may not be figures moving about. I doubt very much if Blakelock thought of anything but the march of his coloring which suggested to him, daylight and distance.

Also a catalog of the colors used might be made, but it would be very difficult, in view of the fact that we have only a photograph to look at. Even the painting itself scarcely gives us the secret of his colors. He so laid his colors that parts of his sky had no sky colors at all, as we imagine that they should be. Why did he make these strange compositions? Simply because a picture was to him a continuous flow of forms and interlocking colors, not placed that this one might say "sky," but to carry a continuous sweep of colors and forms around and around, never halting, never failing, but always moving around and around.

Blakelock never intended to paint for us a scene, but just enough hints of a scene to keep our attention. He painted a succession of lovable tones and graceful lines; almost nothing else. Indeed, this is your true picture, this only is Art.

Blakelock was par excellence a colorist. Like most rich colorists, he took pains not to destroy the freshness of his tints by too much manipulation. He may have painted over and over many times, but never tormented the color. How he did it I cannot tell, and I don't know anybody who can, but preserve it he did.

We love Blakelock's play-work because of its wantonness, its mystery, its richness, its brilliancy and its poetry. Can a statement of separate actualities ever move our hearts like this boy's—play sustained by the element of character called "Genius"?

Plate XLVI

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Seal Rock," Size 42x30—This upright picture shows remarkably gleaming light in the sky, a warm white surrounded by rose-tinted loose clouds, which melt into the dark water, where the light sky is reflected all the way down to masses of rock populated by seals. All the picture is remarkably rich in color, and is one of his best.

—Loaned by S. C. Scotten, Chicago.

Plate XLVII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Moonlight," Size 5½ x 7¼.—It is astonishing what an effect of light has been secured here by the sprightly handling. Without showing colors the tone of the picture is very beautiful, inclining to a series of subdued greens, even through the sky. The photograph is not quite truthful because the glistening spots in the trees should be more subdued.

—Loaned by J. G. Snydacker, Chicago.

Plate XLVIII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"The Last Rays," Size 27 x 34.—This is another grand burst of light and surrounded by masses of trees and land in rich neutral colors which climb up on either side and cross over the top of the picture. There appear to be fallen leaves on a part of the land. The color the artist used is wonderfully vague and brilliant.

—Loaned by J. G. Snydacker, Chicago.

Plate XLIX

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Pool in the Woods —Autumn," Size 12x9. The landscape is brilliant in color; sky a remarkable blue, melting into warm white at horizon. Intense autumnal notes of yellow and red make, in the center, a forcible contrast. All through the picture are beautiful, highly colored notes.

—Loaned by Walden W. Shaw, Chicago.

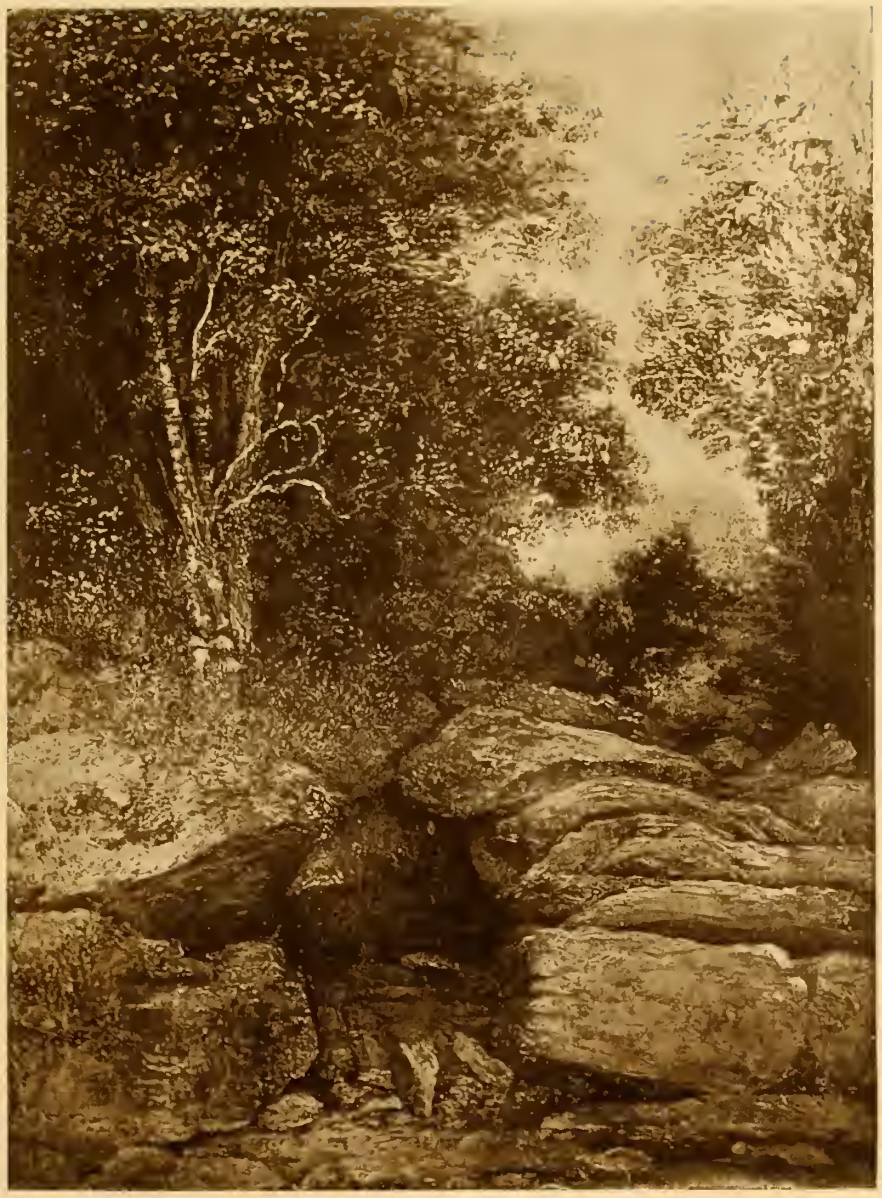

Plate L

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Spring-Rock Cove," Size 37 x 27—This is one of two pictures almost exactly alike except that this appears to be painted from nature. The colors are normal for late summer, there being no bright colors whatsoever. There is a coolness about this overshadowed spring, and the locality invites to repose.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LI

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Autumn," Size 16 x24—In the middle of his career this artist painted many pictures of this minutely detailed style. They were wonderfully luminous, intensely suggestive and in no way servile imitations of actuality. It is quite possible to declare this his best period.

—Loaned by Albright Art Gallery, Buffalo.

Plate LII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"The Ghost Dance," Size 21 x 39.—Like all this artist's presentations this is a floating together of forms and colors to suggest light, space and mystery. It is a series of vibrating spots; a mystery in which we detect wild movements, but no individual personages. The forms in the landscape are dancing an accompaniment to the figures. This painting properly entitled "Dawn," but widely known as "The Ghost Dance," is one of Blakelock's most famous pictures and probably exemplifies his individual viewpoint more than any other single canvas.

—Loaned by Chas. P. Pinckard, Chicago.

Plate LIII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"The Running Brook," Size 10 x 10—The artist has indulged himself in combining a series of dark greens. From out of the mystery and confusion steals a tranquil brook and the sky peeps through the trees in a coquetish way. All over the landscape is a multitude of gleaming dots which add to the delicious confusion of a woodside.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LIV

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Lightning and Storm," Size 8½ x 12—Here we have a typical Blakelock. A confused land with only sufficient form to explain the surface of the earth and tones of the same, carried up into the sky to surround the magnificent burst of light on the approaching masses of vapor. There is an immensity of the space and a power in the approach of the storm that make the picture dramatic. Most of all it is grandly simple.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LV

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Wood Interior," Size 16 x 24—This illustrates the varied treatment by the painter of his landscapes. Instead of the usual color masses thrown together for the sake of effect, he has here very little massing and elaborate study of leafage. Such pictures from his hand are very unusual. The general tone is brownish.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LVI

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Ecstasy," Size 30 x 38. This is a picture of considerable size. We are standing in the confusion of a hilltop. The confused foreground is a very warm brownish-yellow slope. From the valley rises a mountain top of strange bluish-green, and gleaming over it and through these trees the lovely warm-white sky.

—Loaned by Hackley Art Gallery.

Plate LVII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Indian Summer," Size 16x20—The picture is made to glisten and shimmer by numberless dabs of paint all over it, and is one of the mellowest in the collection. The low-toned trees are warm green and dark bottle-green, in a glowing light under a neutral sky. —Loaned by Ralph Cudney.

Plate LVIII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"A Woodland Sunset," Size 26 x 32.—It is a picture painted for the sake of color and light and is extraordinarily brilliant. The entire surface is mottled with rich colors, making a center of brilliancy around which the foreground and tree colors and top of the sky in their darkness form a sort of frame. The trees seem to be permeated with light although they make the dark of the picture.

—Loaned by Charles P. Pinckard, Chicago.

Plate LIX

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Morning," Size 12 x 17—This bright, clear, yellowish picture is very well suggested by the photograph. The trees and distance seem to swim in the luminosity and all the foliage trembles and sparkles. The clever way in which the artist suggests the rocky foreground without too much attention to actualities, helps the mystery of the lighting. —Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LX

RALPH BLAKELOCK — "Startled Deer," Size 11x15½—One of the artist's richest red autumnal colorings, the reddish tone creeping through the entire sky, and all the landscape, even the white deer, tinged with red. Corners are low-toned and very rich.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXI

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Indian Landscape," Size 9x18—Another specially rich spot of color, permeated with reddish tones, which even invade the sky, and course through the trees right and left, all relieved by a strip of dull blue at the horizon and the cloudy sky at the top. —Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Moonlight," Size 16 x 24—This dream of night could hardly be bettered. The very simple luminous sky seems to pervade every part of the landscape. The picture is an experiment in combining bluish-green tones throughout the entire space.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXIII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Kaatherskill Clove," Size 42 x 20—The locality here studied is well known to wanderers in Catskill Mountains. The artist has given the place although he has changed his mountains about to please his own fancy. This makes much more of a picture than the actual spot. The old bridge existed forty years ago. The general tonality is warm, being experiments with browns.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXIV

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"The Camp Fire," Size 6½ x 5½—This is another beautiful combination of rich tone, heavy trees and a gleaming sky behind. It is a note of great richness and very exciting to the inagination.

Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXV

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Early Moon," Size 16 x 23—The simple atmosphere permeating every part of this little canvas gives us a strange feeling of restfulness. There is scarcely anything here but luminosity and airy space at this early evening moment. All forms are blended and obscured but certain forms become strangely visible. There is but one thing can come to our minds, and that is the poetry going through every part of the scene.

—Loaned by L. C. Eastman, Clinton, Iowa.

Plate LXVI

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"Indians Camping," Size 16 x 24—Again Blakelock has made concessions to the love of detail in pictures, but the treatment is so simple and atmospheric that we do not trouble ourselves about simplicities. There are few brilliant colors but much fine tone in the picture. The broad shining sky serves to make the tent, half lost in the foliage, look inviting and restful.

—Loaned by the Owner.

Plate LXVII

RALPH BLAKELOCK—"The Golden Hour," Size 8 x 11—What is better than a picture made simply to express a tonality and a few forceful forms? If there is anything that we may thank Blakelock for it is his insistence upon simple poetry and no interference by commonplace literalisms.

—Loaned by G. H. Buek, New York.

No.

We take pleasure in presenting you this Souvenir of the loan exhibit of works by Innes, Wyant and Blakelock, held at our Chicago Galleries during the month of March, 1913.

Yours respectfully,

Woulton and Ricketts

Chicago Milwaukee New York Paris London